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To Group Ow-Docket@EPA

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Subject EPA and the Corps Must Protect All Waters - EPA-HQ-OW-2007-0282

United States Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20460

To whom it may concern:

I am writing you as I believe the June guidance issued by EPA & Army Corps of Engineers aimed at implementing the Supreme Court's decision in Rapanos v. United States is fundamentally flawed because it does not fully protect the ALL of the water bodies that the agencies have the authority & responsibility to safeguard, even considering the Supreme Court's decisions in Rapanos & the 2001 SWANCC case. I urge you to negate this guidance & issue a replacement document that protects waters to the fullest extent that the Clean Water Act allows.

The Supreme Court's decisions left the agencies a great deal of flexibility to protect the nation's wetlands & streams when they collectively contribute to water quality, yet the guidance wrongly takes a very narrow approach to considering such cumulative effects. The likely result is that more streams & wetlands will be found to be insignificant &, therefore, Unprotected. The resulting adverse impact on water quality will almost certainly be substantial, threatening the safety of drinking water, the quality of waters where we fish & swim, & the health of wildlife that depend on clean water.

Another significant problem with the present proposal is that it leaves in place agency practices that have disavowed Clean Water Act protections for so-called "isolated" waters, leaving thousands of additional water bodies across that country without pollution protections. This policy is scientifically unwise & legally unsound (not to mention morally wrong), yet the EPA & Corps are simply ignoring these problems, even after the U.S. House of Representatives told EPA to stop following the "isolated" waters policy. These are just a few of the many problems with the June 2007 guidance. Please rethink & revise your current interpretation of the Supreme Court's decision & the Clean Water Act. Use your significant remaining legal authority to protect the whole aquatic system because its numerous components are interrelated.

Please remember that the actions YOU take today, will reflect on every component of the Earth forever, & we are Caretakers of what our children have loaned to us for our responsible use - - not for the convenience of big business. I hope you remember the following words & their import: We the People...?

Sincerely,

Randee Schwartz  
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Miller, MO 65707